[*Translation*]

Exploration of Minerals in Bihar

4683. SHRI LALIT ORAON: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted during the last three years for locating minerals in Gumla, Lohardaga, Palamau and Ranchi districts of Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government have formulated any scheme for exploration of Bauxite, limestone, Iron ore,Fireclay there;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the exploration work is likely to be started there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has conducted survey in Palamau and Ranchi districts during the last three years. But no survey was conducted in Gumla and Lohardaga districts during this period.

(b) The Geological Survey of India has estimated a total of 111.05 million tonnes of Coal in Banhardi block of Auranga coal field in Palamau district. Traces of primary gold have been indicated in Bahaikundi, Sarjamdih and Sinduari areas of Ranchi district. Investigation for basemetal in Majhiaon Kalan, Palamau district has not indicated any encouraging results so far.

(c) and(d). No programme is proposed for exploration of Bauxite, limestone, iron and fireclay in Gumla, Lohardaga, Palamau and Ranchi districts of Bihar;

(e) Does not arise.

Fire in Coal Mines

4684. SHRI CHHEDI PASWAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the names of mines where fire broke out and since when;

(b) the value of coal burnt so far; and

(c) the efforts made by the Union Government so far to extinguish the fire and the success achieved in this regard?

THE DEPSUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S.B. NYAMA GOUDA): (a) The major problems of fire exist in Jharia Coalfield of Bharat Coking Coal Limited. There were 70 fires in Jharia Coalfield covering an area of 17.32 Sq. Km. since a long time before the nationalisation of Coking Coal mines. The first fire in this coalfield was reported in the year 1916. The names of the mines and year when the fire was reported first are given attached Statement

(b) It is difficult to make precise estimate of less of coal reserve caused by fires. However, the coal company have estimated that coal reserves to an extent of about 37 million tonnes valued at Rs. 1,110 crores at current prices might have been damaged in these fires.

(c) Prior to nationalisation of coal mines, no effective steps were taken by the erstwhile owners to deal with these fires in a concerted manner. After nationalisation of the coal mines in 1972 and 1973, BCCL have formulated schemes for dealing with major fires in the Jharia Coalfield. Total amount sanctioned for these schemes is Rs. 114.57 crores and these are under different stages of implementation. As a result of these efforts, 5 fires have been fully extinguished. In addition, at 3 sites the protective measures required to deal with the fires have